

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the subject application are respectfully solicited.

Claims 14 through 25 are pending, with Claim 24 being independent. Claim 12 has been cancelled without prejudice. Claims 14 through 25 have been amended.

Claims 12, 14 through 18, and 20 through 23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 over US 5,990,227 (Takizawa, et al.) in view of WO 01/94482 A1 (Yatake, et al.) and US 5,399,296 (Wierenga, et al.). Claim 19 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 over Takizawa, et al. in view of Yatake, et al., Wierenga, et al., and US 6,511,534 B1 (Mishina, et al.). Claims 24 and 25 were objected to and indicated as being allowable if rewritten in independent form. All rejections and objections are respectfully traversed, and are submitted to have been obviated by the rewriting of objected-to Claim 24 in independent form.

The dependent claims are also submitted to be patentable because they set forth additional aspects of the present invention and are dependent from the independent claim discussed above. Therefore, separate and individual consideration of each dependent claim is respectfully requested.

Applicants submit that this application is in condition for allowance, and a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

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